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A HISTORY OF
The Little Britain Monthly Meeting
OF THE
RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS
1804 to 1954

BY HELEN WOOD SHORTLIDGE



An Address Presented By The Author
At The Sesqui Centennial Celebration
August 28, 1954



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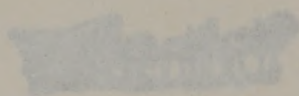


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A HISTORY OF
The Little Britain Monthly Meeting
OF THE
RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS
1804 to 1904

By Helen Ward Thompson



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LITTLE BRITAIN MONTHLY MEETING

The following minute is found on the first page of the records of Little Britain Monthly Meeting in the book kept by the Men Friends:

"Little Britain Monthly Meeting Book of the records of minutes of Men Friends from its first establishment into a monthly meeting first opened the 6th of 10th month, 1804 at Eastland Meeting House and consisting of the particular preparative Meetings of Little Britain and Eastland, heretofore branches of Nottingham Monthly Meeting, remaining to the western Quarterly Meeting as one branch thereof.

At the opening of Little Britain Monthly Meeting to be held at Eastland Meeting House the 6th day of 10th month 1804. The representatives from the Preparatives Meeting are—for Little Britain, Joshua Brown, Jr. and Isaac Webster—for Eastland, Henry Reynolds and Benjamin Mason, who being called were all present. As this Meeting has no regular clerk appointed: Jeremiah Brown is requested to act this time, which he submits to and the following friends are named to confer together and propose to our next Meeting a suitable Friend for this service (vizt) John Webster, Joseph Stubbs, Jeremiah Brown, Sam'l Carter, John Kinsey and Reuben Reynolds. The following minute was now produced from our last Quarterly Meeting, and Friends therein named all attended except William Mode (to Wit) Nottingham Monthly informs they have agreed that East and West Nottingham Meeting compose Nottingham Monthly Meeting to be held alternately between them, at East Nottingham in the even months. Little Britain and Eastland Meeting to compose a new Monthly Meeting to be called Little Britain Monthly Meeting to be held alternately on the seventh day of the week after the first Second Day in each month to open at Eastland in the 10th Month next—which report being approved: James Wilson, John Parker, Sarah Gray, David Wilson, Caleb Swayne and William Mode are appointed to attend the opening of the aforesaid Meetings and report their care to next Quarter.

The subject of suitable Friends to fill the station of Elders for this Monthly Meeting coming under consideration, the Meeting unites in reappointing the Friends heretofore in that station appointed by Nottingham Monthly Meeting who now reside in the compass of this (to Wit) Benjamin Mason, John Webster, Isaiah Brown, Sarah Though, Ruth Webster, Sarah Mason and Elizabeth Harlan, and the clerk is directed to send a copy of this minute to our next Quarterly Meeting of Ministers and Elders."

Thus reads the first minute of Little Britain Monthly Meeting. Where did these Friends come from? Perhaps a brief review will help us to understand.

The first Friends settled around Chester and Philadelphia. From these places they spread out fenwise to the west and northwest, but always coming back to their centers at Concord and Chichester. Friends moved out into the uncultivated woods, in search of places suitable for their occupations, keeping in mind water courses which would furnish power for their mills—a very necessary part of early Colonial life. They needed grist mills to furnish flour and meal; fulling mills, to make their cloth suitable to wear; tanneries, to make hides into leather, etc. Also they looked for fertile lands for farming, knowing that limestone soil and heavy stands of timber, oaks and walnuts, were a sign of fertility. Wherever they went they would return to their meeting houses on Firstday and a weekday for religious worship, until they had moved so far away that this was a burden. Then the usual procedure was to hold meetings in the homes of members, or a school house, then petition the home monthly meeting for per-

mission to do so. When this was granted, then a request for an established meeting, a meeting house, a preparative meeting and then a monthly meeting followed.

Let's see how this held true in the meetings composing Little Britain Monthly Meeting. We usually find that the history of a movement or meeting is connected with the activities of one or a few persons. Who was or were responsible in Little Britain Preparative Meeting, or as it is known locally, Penn Hill Meeting?

ESTABLISHMENT OF MEETINGS

PENN HILL MEETING

The curtain of history first rises on the man largely responsible for the meeting here when we find him getting married 2-28-1709 in Concord meeting house to Isabell Pennell, when she makes her mark in signing the certificate. This man was James King. Nothing more is heard of him until 1717 we find him on the tax lists of West Nottingham township, then a part of Chester County; and of the names of his children in the records of New Garden Monthly Meeting. In the minutes of that meeting we find in 1719 that "the friends of the west end of Nottingham ask for permission to have a weekday meeting at the home of James King, etc. "In 1724 meetings were still held there and in 1727 the West Nottingham meeting house was built on land donated by James King and William Harris. James was an important member there, being on various committees, an elder, an overseer of burials. Why wouldn't a person like that be satisfied to stay put and bring up his family of seven children in the comparative civilization of the Nottingham settlements? Perhaps because of these large families such a migration was necessary. We soon hear of this man in the little known wilds of the newly created Lancaster county. After the disputes about the boundary line between the Penns and Lord Baltimore were partially solved, settlers could be more sure of titles. One of the early settlers in what is now Fulton township was this same James King. He had built a mill in Conowingo Creek (spelled canarawango in all the earlier papers) near the twin bridges, sometime before 1733. In that year a road was laid out from King's mill to Octoraro, thus proving by the record an older settlement—or a road would not have been needed. It is likely that most of his neighbors were Quakers as the direction of the road clearly leads to the Nottingham settlement of Friends, and the place of meeting as its chief objective point. James King took out a warrant for 500 acres November 25, 1735, in which it is described as that "on which he has long been settled," thus adding further proof of his early settlement. It is probable that many of his neighbors came from the Nottinghams: the rich fertile soil of the Conowingo valley being a great temptation to the dwellers on the barren soil found there. Dr. Rupp's History of Lancaster County says that from 1725 on there were 1000 families of Friends in the county—perhaps an overstatement.

It was a long distance from these settlements for the Friends to return to East or West Nottingham twice a week for meeting. Think of the time consumed in traveling that distance on horseback through the mud and snow of winter and the dust and heat of summer, not only to the regular meetings for worship but to Monthly, Quarterly and various committee meetings.

Knowing the history of James King we are not surprised to learn through the minutes of Nottingham Monthly Meeting in 1749 that the "Friends dwelling in Lancaster County near Conowingo request that a meeting for worship on First and week

days be permitted." It doesn't say so, but it is possible it was in the home of this same friend, and in spite of the new road to the south. Chester Quarterly Meeting granted this request 9-13-1749. Two years later, 2-18-1752 the Little Britain Friends appealed to the Quarterly Meeting for help in locating a site for a meeting house and this committee did meet at the home of James King. A location was selected and a preparative meeting was allowed in 8-17-1761, the permission thereof having been delayed because a great rain prevented the committee from attending previously to its duties. Little Britain grew rapidly. In 1767 they requested the Nottingham Monthly Meeting to meet there but the matter was deferred and it was not until 1783 that four sessions were held regularly here until Little Britain Monthly Meeting was established in 1804.

EASTLAND MEETING

In the meantime, Friends in the southern part of Little Britain Township, not wanting to travel all the way back to the Nottinghams, or north to Little Britain, began in early part of 1796 to petition the Monthly Meeting, asking to be allowed to hold a meeting of their own. As usual, committees were appointed, visits made, the situation studied, and reports given. All this takes time, particularly since it has to come before two Quarterly Meetings, which meet every four months. Finally permission was granted in 1798, and meetings were held in a school house on land of Henry Reynolds. In 1802 they followed the usual pattern and began asking for the privilege of a preparative meeting, which was granted and the first meeting held 4-13-1803. That was an important year in Eastland history, that being the beginning of its preparative meeting and the building of the present stone meeting house. There was a strong settlement of Friends in these neighborhoods for in the fall of that year, Eastland, together with Little Britain, requested of the Quarterly Meeting permission to separate from Nottingham Monthly Meeting and established a monthly meeting of its own. As usual, Friends procedure is slow. After the appointment of committees, visits and reports, fortunately there was not much objection. The committee reported "we feel sympathy with them and most easy their request be granted." But it must come before two or more Quarterly Meetings, so it was not until a year later that the first session was held at Eastland on 10th month 6th, 1804, and the minute read that you heard at the beginning of this paper, with Jeremiah Brown, clerk for that day and John Kinsey later appointed the regular clerk. Eastland, having a new meeting house and being in a central location between Little Britain and Nottingham, seems a good choice to have the initial meeting. The sessions were held alternately at Little Britain and Eastland until 1818. At that time they agreed to meet in the 10th month at Eastland and the 11th and 12th at Little Britain and so to continue one month at Eastland and two at Little Britain. In 1840 it was decided to hold monthly meeting at Eastland and Drumore alternately during the summer, beginning with 5th month and at Penn Hill for the winter months, beginning with 11th month. This practice continued until 1943 when the decision was reached to have the monthly meeting at Eastland 6-8-10th months; rest of year at Penn Hill. In 1945 another change was made and Monthly Meeting was held at Drumore in 7-8 months; the rest of the year at the other two meeting houses, meeting at Eastland in the even months. In the early part of 1943, during the gas rationing, Monthly Meeting was held after joint meetings for worship, alternating at Penn Hill and Eastland. In 1952 a radical change was made, when the day of meeting was changed from the time honored 7th day to the 3rd 1st day in each month. This is the present custom.

DRUMORE MEETING

To return to the other meeting in the monthly meeting. While Little Britain and Eastland were getting started, Friends were still moving back into the unsettled sections farther west, nearer the Susquehanna. Or they may have been there for a long time. At any rate they were finding it a laborious task to return to the meeting house at Little Britain, or the long trek to the Nottinghams for the week and First day meetings. By 10-10-1811 we find them on the minutes of Little Britain Monthly Meeting when "several members of Little Britain Particular meeting taking into consideration their remote situation and distance from meeting ask for the privilege of holding a meeting for divine worship somewhere in their neighborhood." Thus running true to pattern, you see. Again committees were appointed, who reported 3 months later in 1st month 1812 and permission was given them "to indulge them with a meeting for worship once in two weeks on trial, if they could settle on a place to hold the meeting." In 2nd month these friends reported they had agreed to hold the meetings in a school-house on David Parry's land and the first meeting was held 2-16-1812 and was the beginnings of what we know now as Drumore meeting. We don't know what the difficulty there was but on the minutes regularly we find they were given permission "one month longer", "three months longer," "for some time longer." One minute did state, however, they were having trouble with the midweek meeting. After four years of struggling, in 1815 they were given permission to build a meeting house but were still to continue under the care of the monthly meeting, often with the familiar phrase: "of three months longer." In 8-10-1816 it was reported that Drumore meeting was established and could hold regular meetings for worship. This would remove it from its uncertain state. The meeting house was built in 1816. The next step was the request for a preparative meeting which came in 3-7-1818 and strange to relate, they were permitted to do so 5-9-1818—only 3 months, which was a short time. And the Western Quarter gave permission and on 5-20-1818 Drumore Preparative Meeting was established.

Drumore meeting is no longer in existence. Because of the dwindling membership there, the midweek meeting was discontinued in 1886. In 1934 they decided to hold 3 Preparative meetings during the year, but to continue with the meeting for worship. By 1936 the Preparative meeting was laid down and the members transferred to Little Britain Preparative meeting. Modern roads and conveyances now made it easy for them to travel to Penn Hill. The Drumore Preparative meeting had transferred in 1928 its property to the Drumore cemetery Association. No meetings are held there now except the two sessions of the Monthly Meeting during the summer.

EAST BRITAIN MEETING

We will now consider another meeting not generally known to be connected with this monthly meeting. From the minutes of Little Britain Monthly Meeting, 5-19-1849 we read: "A request having been laid before this meeting, signed by a number of members of our Monthly Meeting, for the privilege of holding an indulged meeting of worship on the 1st day of the week, according to the order established among Friends, to meet at 10:00 o'clock in the morning until the 1st of 10th month then at 11 o'clock at a house which has been erected near Ashville and proposed to be called East Britain meeting house. The request on consideration was acceded to and the meeting directed to be opened on First Day the 27th of the present month (May). Joseph Thomas and others were appointed to attend the opening and report."

This was 1½ acres of ground on which a brick meeting house was erected. David

H. Keech, farmer, had sold it for \$40.00 to the following trustees: Joseph Paxson and Nathan Milner and Hart G. Coates, E. Nottingham, "In trust for the Society of Friends and for the subscribers and contributors to the said lot and to the building thereon to be erected, said building to be used by the Society of Friends for all the purposes for which they use meeting houses and when not occupied by the Society of Friends to be free for occasional meetings of other religious societies and also may be used for the purpose of lectures on Anti-slavery, temperance or any moral, or literary subjects as in and by the conditions under which said subscriptions and contributions were raised may more fully appear to the only proper use and behoof of the said Society subscribers and contributors for the purposes aforesaid forever." This was at a time when halls were being erected for the use of lecturers, many of whom were barred from using the regular meeting houses.

Reports were given regularly every six months that the meetings there were held to satisfaction. In 1857 East Britain meeting was reported to be in a declining condition but was to be continued. By 1868 the talk of selling the property was postponed. And on 9-3-1873, Hart G. Coates, the surviving trustee transferred the property to B. F. Taylor by special act of the Assembly, April 10, 1873, and he in 1877 sold the property to the Ashville Presbyterian church. The house is still standing.

MEETING HOUSES

EASTLAND MEETING HOUSE

Now that we have the monthly meeting established, let us learn something about the meeting houses under its care. The first meetings in a new neighborhood were held in the homes of members, or in the school houses which Friends early built for the education of their large families, usually eight or ten children, or more. We have learned that Eastland and Drumore meetings were first held in their schoolhouses. Let us consider first Penn Hill meeting house. Quoting from Chester Quarterly Mtg., under date of 2-18-1752: "This meeting sometime since at the request of Friends living in and near Little Britain with the concurrence of Nottingham Monthly Meeting, appointed a committee to view and settle a place to build a meeting house. But for some reason the building of the meeting house was delayed and since the place whereon it was proposed to build appears somewhat discommodious, they not request that this meeting would condescend to them so far as to appoint some friends to view and review the place again in order for an allowance to build a meeting house on. This meeting in regard to their request do appoint . . . to meet at James King's and report to next meeting." There seems to have been a great deal of disagreement in the meeting on various matters. The place finally selected was on high ground on the west side of Conowingo creek, with a long view to the east, on land of Michael King, eldest son of James King. The superior meetings insisted on a title to the land. On the 17th of the third month, commonly called March, 1758, Michael King deeded the five acres, "whereon a meeting house has been erected" to the following trustees: Samuel Boyd, of Drumore, yeoman; Joshua Brown, West Nottingham, County of Chester, cooper; Isaac Williams, Little Britain, cordwainer, (that is shoemaker); and Vincent King, same place, yeoman. For the use of said people. (This Samuel Boyd, wife and family had presented to Nottingham Monthly meeting their certificates from the Monthly Meeting of Ballinaeare, County of Antrim, North of Ireland, bearing date of 10-2-1736). The marriage of George Payne, York County and Rachel Cowgill.

Drumore Township was held 3-28-1752 "at the home of James King—" thus indicating there was no meeting house there at that time. The first mention I find of "the public meeting place at Little Britain" is on the marriage certificate, dated 12-11-1755, when Thomas King, a son of James King, marries Ann Coppock. So I think the house was built between 1752 and 1755, surely before 1758, probably of logs or stone. Reading on in the Western Quarterly Minutes we come to the startling news, 8-18-1760, in answer to the annual query about new meeting houses: "A new meeting house built at Little Britain and another at Sadsbury both in Lancaster County in the room of two that were burnt at these places in the latter part of the year 1764." We have no idea where the meetings were held in the interim. No marriages were held in their "public meeting place" during this time. This 1766 house served the membership until 1823, when under the ministry of Mercy Shreve Brown, the house became too small to accommodate the friends who came to hear her. Her husband built and donated to Friends the two story brick house we are in today. We know this for the minutes are very definite. Little Britain Monthly Meeting records 4-19-1823: "Whereas Little Britain meeting house is to be taken down and rebuilt, it is the conclusion of this meeting that the Monthly Meeting is to be held at Eastland until the other house is finished and comes in course to be held there." On 8-13-1823, also we read: "This meeting is now informed that a new meeting house is built at Little Britain suitable to contain the Quarterly Meeting and have agreed to lay the same before next Quarterly Meeting." And the final minute, 9-17-1823: "The following minute was brought up from Little Britain Preparative Meeting—"To little Britain Monthly Meeting these may inform Friends that the new meeting house is now finished agreeable to my proposal in the 3rd month last which was to build a meeting house of brick 50 feet long and 40 feet wide with galleries in front upstairs, it cost me in Cash \$2053.48 (not counting my own services) which is all paid for and I now give up the same to friends of the Preparative meeting without claiming anything for it, or any right to it more than any other member of the said meeting and I allow it for the benefit of our society of Friends for the use of holding all meetings for worship and Discipline as may be agreed upon by the Society in the future.

Witness my hands the 9th day of 10th month 1823, Jerh Brown.

The above proposal was fully agreed to and accepted and as the Preparative Meeting is not a meeting of record, it was proposed to lay the same before next Monthly Meeting and if approved to have the same recorded in the monthly meeting book. 'Signed on behalf of said meeting held 9th day of 10th month 1823 by Gardner Furness, clerk.' Here we see the value of making a full record of what has happened. Mercy Brown, however, did not live to preach in the new house: her death occurred 6 days after the acceptance of the house.

EASTLAND MEETING HOUSE

Eastland Preparative Meeting minutes give a good account of the building of its house. It cost 332 pounds, 17 shillings and 6 pence farthing and was paid for by subscription. In Western Quarterly Meeting minutes in answer to annual query, 2nd month 1803, we hear: "A new meeting house built in Little Britain Township to accommodate Friends of Eastland." This is the substantial stone structure there now and which is celebrating its 151st anniversary next month. It stands on 6¾ A., donated 1-10-1798 by Henry Reynolds and Reuben Reynolds, consideration 15 shillings. First trustees were James Harlan, Henry Reynolds, Jr. and Abner Brown all of Little Britain Township.

DRUMORE MEETING HOUSE

As stated before, meetings were held in a schoolhouse on David Parry's land, under the supervision of Little Britain Monthly Meeting until we read on 11-11-1815: "David Parry on behalf of members of the indulged meeting were agreed it would be best to erect a house to hold their meetings in." In 12th month of that year it was reported they had fixed on a suitable piece of ground near David Parry's, containing about 3 acres on which they propose to build a house about 30 x 22½ feet, "believing that a convenient house for them to meet in for the purpose of religious worship may conduce to the benefit of themselves and families." The house was evidently built during 1816 for on 2-18-1817 in answer to the annual query: "A new meeting house built in Drumore Township, Lancaster County and a new meeting held there by permission." And from the Western Quarter 2-18-1817 "A new meeting house built in Drumore Township, within the limits of Little Britain Meeting." This is the stone and frame building there now and was built on 3 acres conveyed 8-15-1816 by Jacob Shoemaker and Joyce his wife for the consideration of \$1.00. The trustees were Joseph Stubbs, David Parry and Samuel Smith "for to build a meeting house and for a burying ground for the use of said meeting." Appropriately enough, the first marriage on record there was 12-17-1817 and the contracting parties were David Parry and Lydia Richardson. We see why David was so desirous to have a house built.

PERSONALITIES

There have been several recorded ministers as recorded on the minutes. Among those mentioned have been Joshua Brown, about whom we will hear later. Others are Mercy Shreve Brown, the wife of Jeremiah Brown to whom is given credit for the building of this meeting house and its gift to the Society of Friends. Others have been Rebecca Fell of Eastland; Elizabeth Smedley and Mercy K. Johnston of Penn Hill; Of more recent years we are more familiar with William M. Way, Richard J. S. Bullock, Alice M. Coates, Howard Coates and Seth L. Kinsey.

We have heard about the Kings. Another early family in the Little Britain neighborhood was that of the Browns. In 1758, Joshua Brown left the Nottinghams and after purchasing 500 acres in what was then Little Britain, now Fulton, moved to his farm on the Conowingo creek. Joshua was an eminent minister and traveled far in the love of the gospel. In the minutes of Nottingham Monthly Meeting, under date of 10-1777 we find: "Little Britain's report informs us that Joshua Brown laid before that meeting a draft that had attended his mind to pay a religious visit to the meetings of Friends to the southward which appears to extend to the Carolinas or Georgia." Because of the difficulty of traveling and no one offering to go along as a companion, the matter was left under advisement to an adjourned meeting on the 2nd day following. At the adjourned meeting, the matter being a weighty one, was again referred to the next regular meeting. Permission was granted 12th month 1777. So Joshua Brown left his mill, in the winter time and during the difficult days of the Revolutionary War, started on his religious visit. On his way he stopped to visit at Winchester, Va., the conscientious objectors of those times who had been exiled there. In the Carolinas he was stopped in the belief that he was a spy, and his pass demanded. His minute from the meeting naturally did not satisfy the law which demanded a pass signed by Congress or some military officer. There was nothing for the officers to do but to throw them into jail, although they believed that Joshua was telling the truth.

Joshua would not take the test nor would he accept food from the jailor. He bought his own food until the Friends of the neighborhood, learning of his plight, rallied to him, some coming as far away as 25 miles. They were allowed to hold religious meetings in the jail and eventually were given their freedom in the daytime returning to the prison at night. They were offered their freedom if they would promise to leave the state and never return. This they would not do nor would they do "hat honor" to the judge and this in spite of the threat of banishment to Europe. Eventually they were released within the limits of Bush River Monthly Meeting, where Joshua visited the 130 families in that monthly meeting. An act of Assembly gave them complete freedom after an incarceration of 2 days less than 6 months. Joshua continued his previous plans and, before returning to his home and family, visited the families in North and South Carolina.

His son, Jeremiah Brown, a miller, was the man who built and donated to the Society of Friends the brick meeting house. About 1800 he purchased and developed the slate quarries at Peach Bottom.

CHANGE IN SET UPS

In 1819 a decided change was made in the setup of Little Britain Meeting. In review let me tell you the different meetings under which Little Britain Monthly Meeting has functioned. When the Little Britain meeting is first mentioned on any minutes, it was on the minutes of New Garden Monthly Meeting and Chester Quarterly Meeting. The latter's name in 1800 was changed to Concord Quarterly Meeting. When Nottingham Monthly Meeting was organized in 1730, we came under its jurisdiction, and remained there until Little Britain Monthly Meeting was organized in 1804. A change in Quarterly Meetings came in 1758 when the monthly meetings on the western edge of Chester Quarterly Meeting were combined to form Western Quarterly Meeting. So when Little Britain and Eastland were organized, we belonged to Nottingham Monthly, Western Quarter and Philadelphia Yearly Meetings. As early as 1812 there had been agitation for yet another change and in 1819 Little Britain, Nottingham and Deer Creek Monthly Meetings were taken from Western Quarter and combined into another Quarterly Meeting, called appropriately enough—Nottingham Quarterly Meeting. As a side light, it is interesting to note that the name Cecil Quarterly Meeting was considered and to continue—to make an even more drastic change the new Quarter was taken from Philadelphia Yearly Meeting and joined to Baltimore Yearly Meeting. This required time as it had to come before 2 different Yearly Meetings. This is the arrangement at the present time. One session of Nottingham Quarterly Meeting is held at Penn Hill each year in the fall in the 12th month.

At the time of the Separation, there is no recorded trouble at Penn Hill, due, so tradition says, to the beneficent influence of Mercy Shreve Brown, whose death had occurred seven years before. All remained as members of one meeting, becoming followers of Elias Hicks. At Eastland a number were disowned, who withdrew and built another house, known locally as Ballance's Meeting house. These Friends had wanted to continue using the stone meeting house but were told to hunt a place of their own.

SEPARATE SESSIONS

Some of you may be unfamiliar with the fact that when Little Britain Monthly Meeting was established in 1804, the men and women held separate sessions, presided over by men and women clerks respectively. And, of course, keeping separate records under "Little Britain Monthly Meeting of Men Friends," or "Little Britain Monthly Meeting of Women Friends." Later they wrote: "Little Britain Monthly Meeting, Men's Branch." Because of the separate sessions of men and women in business, the meeting houses were built as they are with partitions between the two sides. After the meeting for worship was over, the partitions would be raised, or lowered, as the case may be, and the business session conducted. We find that in the latter part of the last century there was a growing sentiment in favor of men and women holding joint sessions, in some sections growing faster than in others. On 2-18-1893 there must have been held a satisfactory session of Little Britain Monthly Meeting. That was the date of the first joint session of men and women friends. The clerks were Howard Coates and Grace Ann King. This practice still is in operation.

The women's minutes are different from the men's. They usually made more mention of the schools under the care of the meeting and of other social problems. The men's minutes were more definite with business matters—such as the establishment of meetings, their discontinuance, etc. Both were faithful in their record of Friends who had violated the Discipline and their inevitable disownment, unless a proper acknowledgment was made. The early minutes of the women show a lack of education in comparison with the men. Ordinary words are misspelled, such as "uslally," "goun" (gone) "apointed," "tail bairling," etc.

I am sorry I have not been able to spend more time with the women's minutes. Practically all the information that I have has been gleaned from the men's records. Lack of time prevented their perusal.

I want to express tribute to the hundreds of clerks who have been faithful in recording the minutes of the many sessions of the monthly meeting and the quarterly meetings, as well, and to those who have transcribed them into the permanent record books, which have a safe location in the record rooms at Baltimore, Swarthmore Friends Historical Library, 302 Arch St., and 1300 Locust St., Philadelphia. It is interesting to see the pattern repeated in all meeting records and their faithful adherence to the injunctions of the Books of Discipline. We are grateful for the information thus preserved for us so faithfully. This is a hint to present clerks to be definite in your recorded minutes, thinking of future historians, who will scan your records for information in another 100 years.

MARRIAGES

In looking over the records we find that nearly half of the marriages under the care of the monthly meeting have been held in the meeting houses and nearly all the rest in the homes of the contracting parties. There have been 161 Marriages under the care of the Monthly Meeting. Of these 43 have been held at Penn Hill meeting house; 23 at Eastland; 14 at Drumore. 73 have been held in the homes; 3 in other meeting houses and 5 have been married in Philadelphia before the mayor, or some official, by Friends ceremony. Within 17 years after Drumore house was built, there were 12 marriages.

"Passing meeting"—which takes two months to accomplish, must have been an ordeal when the contracting parties personally expressed their intentions at the monthly meeting. Later a written declaration was all that was necessary. All followed the same pattern, more or less, as laid down by the Yearly Meeting.

Those friends who violated the discipline by being married by a "priest", a minister or a justice of the peace were invariably disowned unless they made a satisfactory acknowledgment. Around 1842 we find the practice of meetinghouse marriages had gone out of fashion and the custom of marriages at the homes of the bride's parents was the thing to do. Around 1880 many were being married by Friends ceremony in the presence of a justice of the peace, or the mayor of a city, etc. Often an acknowledgment was accepted by the meeting. In fact a great grandson of James King was married in this fashion before the mayor of Lancaster. He was severely dealt with by the meeting; he made the proper acknowledgment—and was not disowned although many were. Around 1915 the custom of being married in the meeting houses came again into general use and is generally followed today. The marriage of James Wood and Mercy M. Carter was held in Eastland meeting house in 1845 and the next one held there was in 1915 when their granddaughter, Ida P. Wood and H. Bennett Contes were married.

The first marriage under Little Britain Monthly Meeting was of Jonathan Livezey and Mary King, daughter of Vincent King in 12-13-1804, soon you see after the first session. The last was 6-29-1952 when Anna Mae Weaver and J. Roland Forbes were married at Penn Hill. A written record of these marriages is kept in the recorder's book. These records are eagerly sought by searchers of family history. Lucky is the person who has a Quaker ancestry to search, for he can invariably find what he wants. A list of marriages in our neighborhood and under Nottingham Monthly Meeting and those under Little Britain Monthly Meeting can be seen here today.

REMOVALS

Friends have always been advised to remove their memberships when moving into a new neighborhood and a record of this is faithfully kept. It is interesting to look over such a list from our monthly meeting and speculate why the members were constantly shifting their membership. In spite of the fact that many of the original members came from the Nottingham meetings and the meetings over the Octoraro in Chester Co., many returned to these meetings for some reason or other. Some, of course, were those of brides who transferred membership to the monthly meeting of their new husbands. As early as 1806 members began to follow the lure to the west and we find them from time to time being transferred to monthly meetings in Ohio, Indiana and Illinois. Whole families would move away—which must have been discouraging to the home meeting. In 1806 there were 19 removals, involving 6 certificates, in 1828, 12 of the Richardson family migrated to Deerfield Monthly Meeting in Ohio, which involved 7 certificates. In 1868, 19 removals meant the writing of 10 certificates. Those of you who are clerks will appreciate the amount of work involved when all this was written by hand and transferred by "suitable conveyance," often by personal means, before the advent of the mail service. This list of removals is useful to those tracing family history, for they are explicit in stating family relationships. You will find a list of those under this meeting here today.

In 1806 the Discipline advised parents to report to the monthly meeting any of

their children put out as apprentices or placed in friends' families which you will find mentioned in the list.

Answer to queries:

I will quote an answer to a query of 1804 in which you will notice a difference from ours of the present time. "Tale-bearing, back biting and spreading evil reports in a good degree discouraged but greater care and circumspection on these accounts is sometimes necessary. Care is taken to deal with offenders with desires to be favored with Christian meekness and in the performance thereof."

SCHOOLS

True to pattern, Little Britain Friends were active in education. As you have heard the first meetings for worship in two of our constituent meetings were held in the school house. Little Britain had a school somewhere. We have no record where. Friends were very desirous to have their children exposed to education. Very soon after moving into a new neighborhood, school houses would be built, usually of logs. These were conducted by a committee of the Monthly Meeting or preparative Meeting and a fund raised for that purpose. From excerpts from "The Subscription Book for Schools in Little Britain Monthly Meeting under date of 12-19-1793 (A copy of which I found at the Historical Society of Penna., at 1300 Locust, Phila.,) we note the following: "We the subscribers being desirous of contributing to the Schooling of Poor Children as well as to Encourage the Employing of suitable Teachers in our schools, within the Compass of Little Britain Preparative Meeting, agree to pay into the Hands of Henry Reynolds, Jeremiah Brown, John Webster and Vincent King our Trustees appointed by said meeting the sums we have subscribed underneath, etc. "The sum subscribed was 350 Pounds 18 Farthings 4 Pence—a sum more than the cost of building Eastland Meeting house. There seemed to have been some uneasiness in the School fund which crops out from time to time on the minutes. In 1828, \$47.68 was spent in repairing the schoolhouse. And in the final entry 6-18-1835 they agreed to close the school funds, as follows: "also a ballance was agreed by said meeting to be appropriated towards building sheds for the use of the meeting—which sum is \$115.89—which closes the account of the school fund." This was signed by Eli Smedley and John Kirk. Besides these school funds in the local meetings we find on the records of Eastland Preparative Meeting in 10-12-1803 they were "recommended to enter subscriptions to defray the debt contracted by the committee who have the management of the boarding school," referring to Westtown School. So you see they were not too far out in the wilderness to answer demands from the center of Quakerdom.

There were schoolhouses at both Eastland and Little Britain. The one at Eastland was located on the south border of their property. In 1811 there were 2 large schools reported but neither taught by a Friend. In 1816, 3 schools were reported. That was the year that Buckingham school house was built on land donated by Samuel Carter and was located on the road leading from Eastland meeting house to Lee's bridge. This continued as a friends school until 1838, when the new public school system having come into effect, the building was leased as a public school. These were good schools and many pupils went from them to make their marks in the world. At the beginning of Drumore's history they had a school house on David Parry's land, which was near the meeting house. By 1821 the Monthly Meeting records that there was no school house or school at Drumore.

ANECDOTES

We have been hearing of the constructive acts of the members of the meeting. Do you want to hear some of the offences for which members were brought to account? And sometimes disowned? These appear on the minutes: 9-8-1807 "B. H. hath attended a place of public resort and then became unguarded so as to quarrel and fight." 1811 "R. R. guilty of quarrelling and striking a man in an angry manner." These two were reconciled thru the efforts of the meeting. 3-27-1816 "The overseers bring complaint against J. R. for reproachful conduct, informing of a black man supposed to be a slave for which he received a considerable reward and from his information he was taken away contrary to the law of the state which conduct he justifies," and this 50 years before the Civil War. 3-18-1837. S. R. reported in Eastland meeting to have acknowledged threatening to shoot an officer of the law if he attempted or persisted in taking from him two oxen which he considered his own."

He was disowned. 3-18-1843 "Complaint is brought against 4 men, brothers, I suppose, and T. P. "Who acknowledged the fact of having gone to one of the public school houses in Little Britain township where some of the inhabitants held a singing school during last month with the intention of breaking up said school and did succeed in doing so in a very disorderly manner, some of them used abusive and profane language." They were testified against. 1-3-1844, M. R. dealt with for forcibly preventing antislavery speakers from speaking in Eastland meeting house. One method he used was to throw water on the fire. He later was forgiven because he had not known until afterwards that permission had been granted for the meeting.

FRIENDS IN WAR

The Society of Friends has always been opposed to war and all preparation thereto. From the beginning of the monthly meeting, the members have been subjected to demands of the military. In 1807 rather than pay exempt fines in lieu of personal services in the militia, they submitted to having property taken from them. In that year \$300.06 was taken. A committee appointed for the purpose kept a strict account. In 1810 more military requisitions were demanded. In 1813 one member acknowledged having furnished a man with a gun and ammunition for military purposes and paying a military fine. You see they took everything very seriously. In 1814, for a military fine of \$22.00, \$37.00 worth of value was taken. In 1818, a list of property taken from Friends of Little Britain on account of military requisitions amounting to \$187.00 was taken for sums demanded of them for \$97.00.

In 1862 T. K. asked to be forgiven for voluntarily contributing money for the purchase of carnal weapons. T. B. acknowledged having paid money to have his son kept from war. In 1862 a group of 30 men sent a letter to the Monthly Meeting stating that the love of their country was the reason for their helping the military forces in the hour when the enemy was so near to hand.

In the two recent world wars the men who answered their country's call were not disowned. Although Friends were still opposed to war, they were more sympathetic. There were efforts to make the lot of those in Civilian Public Service Camps more endurable.

INFLUENCE IN POLITICAL LIFE

Little Britain Monthly Meeting had several of its members to represent our county in the state and national affairs. Jeremiah Brown, the donor of this house, served in the state House of Representatives from 1796-1800, then meeting at Lancaster. His son, Jeremiah Brown, Jr., served in the House in 1826, when the state inaugurated "her great system of internal improvements." In 1836 he was a member of the convention to revise the state constitution. In 1840 and 1842 he was elected a member of Congress from Lancaster County and in 1850 an associate judge of the county for a term of 5 years.

William H. Brosius, a member of Drumore meeting, served in the House of Representatives from 1883-1886 and again from 1901-1906. Day Wood, from the meeting at Penn Hill, served in the House at Harrisburg from 1865-1866, during the Civil War and voted in favor of the proposed amendment to the Constitution of the United States, forever abolishing slavery. Wm. W. Griest, of Eastland meeting, was a member of Congress, 1909-1929.

Of more recent times, Norman Wood, from Eastland meeting, has been a member of the same body since 1923, being the oldest there in point of service. He is chairman of the powerful Appropriations Committee.

I have left to the last a man who, I think, has had a more wide-spread influence on the life of the United States. This was a young man, who received his education in the Eastland schools, became a lawyer and went to the west. He became a friend of the struggling young lawyer, Abraham Lincoln. This man, Jesse Fell, realizing that the nation needed to become familiar with Lincoln, persuaded Lincoln to write his autobiography and sent it to his friend, Joseph J. Lewis, who published it in his newspaper, The Chester County Times, in West Chester. This was the beginning of the campaign that took Lincoln to the White House and the beginning of his service to the nation.

FIRST DAY SCHOOLS

Little Britain Friends have been active in religious education also. As early as 1860 a First Day School was organized at Penn Hill by Thomas P. King, a great grandson of the first James King. It has answered a need in the neighborhood where children of all creeds have found a welcome.

William M. Way and Sidney Killough had opened a First Day School at Eastland some years previous to 1880, which flourished for a few years. On 5-23-1887 it was reopened by Rebecca D. King, whose husband was a brother of Thomas P. King. In 1947 it celebrated its 60th anniversary with 11 of the original 60 members present. At the present time the house is full of children each Firstday.

At Drumore a flourishing school was held for many years but went out of existence before the laying down of the meeting.

MEMBERSHIP

The highest membership I could find was in 1860 when there were 404 members on the roll although there may have been more earlier with no record recorded—229 from Penn Hill; 144 from Eastland; 121 from Drumore. In 1924 there were 318, in 1948, 237. At the present time there are 212 members, with the larger number at Penn Hill.

RECENT EVENTS IN THE MONTHLY MEETING

In 1919 the Advancement committee was organized with Martha S. Brown as chairman; Leslie I. Bolton, secretary and Helen Wood, treasurer. This committee is still serving the monthly meeting.

In 1921 the first union Thanksgiving services were held at Penn Hill and have been held with a few exceptions ever since.

In 1925 the Monthly Meeting Counsellors were first appointed. 1929 was the beginning of the Vesper services at Penn Hill, which have served the community since and have helped to weld the three meetings together.

In 1931 the women of the Monthly Meeting learning of the plight of the soft coal miners in West Virginia began sewing for them. The need for clothing by the Spanish refugees in 1937 was answered with more sewing. Three years later, 1940, was the beginning of the present American Friends Service Committee sewing group, when the work was organized under the chairmanship of Mary A. Gatchell. This sewing group has served faithfully, more or less, ever since. They have contributed many articles, including quilts, which have helped to alleviate the suffering which always follows war. In looking over the diary of my mother's aunt, Agnes King, I find that such service is nothing new to the members. She records in 1865: "Sewed some dresses for the freed people."

In 1939 we note the beginning of one of the popular events of the year at Penn Hill, when all members of the Monthly Meeting unite in serving a chicken supper to friends of Friends in the neighborhood. In 1940 the supper plans were organized under the chairmanship of Adaline P. Edwards. At these early suppers the proceeds were a little over \$100.00. The highest amount received was in 1949 when \$985.83 was realized; \$900.00 was sent to the Service Committee and some of the remainder used to purchase material for sewing.

A newsletter was started in 1944 and sent to the absent members, of which they are many. The next year, 1945, we note the beginning of another innovation. In that year the Vacation Religious School was started. One has only to visit one of the sessions to realize its popularity and value. The first one was held at Eastland, with an enrollment of 111, an average attendance of 87 and a perfect attendance of 55. Those of you who are familiar with Eastland will realize how the capacity of that house would be strained. The next year finds 2 schools in operation. This year there were schools at each meeting house.

At Penn Hill, a class of young people, organized by Edith Bradley Weaver, called "The True Blue" has met continuously for over 25 years and has been responsible for many modern improvements at the meeting house. A member of the monthly meeting, Lucretia Wood, spent 1½ years in Europe, beginning in 1948, working with the American Friends Service Committee in Finland and Germany on problems connected with the aftermath of the war. Penn Hill was proud to have one of its members, A. Ruth King, attend the All-World Conference in Oxford, England, in 1952. Much cooperation has been found on all sides in planning for the celebration today.

During the latter part of the last century, interest in the meetings declined. But due to the interest engendered by energies of the Baltimore Yearly Meeting Executive Secretaries, Dr. O. Edward Janney, Bliss Forbush, William Mackinson, H. Bennett and

The present clerks of Little Britain Monthly Meeting are James M. Bradley and Helen S. Kirk.

These have been the highlights of the history of Little Britain Monthly Meeting from 1804 to 1964. The material the historian will have for his or her disposal in another 50 years will depend on the united efforts of all the members of the two meetings. The history of a Friend's meeting depends on the cooperation of all the members and not the work of a few.

Edith P. Coates and the present incumbent, Marshall Sutton, we note an increased interest and are hopeful for continued interest for the future.

-B-
 BENNETT
 H., 14
 BOLTON
 Leslie I., 14
 BOYD
 Samuel, 5(2)
 BRADLEY
 Edith, 14
 James M., 15
 BROSIUS
 William H., 13
 BROWN
 Abner, 8
 Isaiah, 1
 Jeremiah, 1(2), 3, 7
 8, 11, 13
 Jeremiah Jr., 13
 Jerh., 6
 Joshua, 5, 7(4)
 Joshua Jr., 01
 Martha S., 14
 Mercy, 6
 Mercy Shreve, 6,7,8
 BULLOCK
 Richard J. S., 7

-C-
 CARTER
 Mercy M., 10
 Sam'l, 1
 COATES
 Alice M., 7
 Edith P., 15
 H. Bennett, 10
 Hart G., 5(2)
 Howard, 7, 9
 COPPOCK
 Ann, 8
 COWGILL
 Rachel, 5

-E-
 EDWARDS
 Adaline P., 14

-F-
 FELL
 Jesse, 13
 Rebecca, 7
 FORBES
 J. Roland, 10
 FORBUSH
 Bliss, 14
 FURNESS
 Gardner, 6

-G-

GATCHELL
 Mary A., 14
 GRAY
 Sarah, 1
 GRIEST
 Wm. W., 13

-H-
 HARLAN
 Elizabeth, 1
 James, 6
 HARRIS
 William, 2
 HICKS
 Elias, 8

-J-
 JANNEY
 O. Edward, 14
 JOHNSTON
 Mercy K., 7

-K-
 KEECH
 David H., 5
 KILLOUGH
 Sidney, 13
 KING
 A. Ruth, 14
 Agnes, 14
 Grace Ann, 9
 James, 2(6),3,5(2),
 6(2), 10, 13
 Mary, 10
 Michael, 5(2)
 Rebecca D., 13
 Thomas, 6
 Thomas P., 13(2)
 Vincent, 5, 10, 11
 KINSEY
 John, 1, 3
 Seth L., 7

KIRK
 Helen S., 15
 John, 11

-L-
 LEWIS
 Joseph J., 13
 LINCOLN
 Abraham, 13
 LIVEZEY
 Jonathan, 10
 Lord Baltimore, 2

-M-
 MACKINSON
 William, 14
 MASON
 Benjamin, 1(2)

Sarah, 1
 MILNER
 Nathan, 5
 MODE
 William, 1(2)

-P-
 PARKER
 John, 1
 PARRY
 David, 4, 7(5), 11
 PAXON
 Joseph, 5
 PAYNE
 George, 5
 PENN, 2

-R-
 REYNOLDS
 Henry, 1, 3, 6, 11
 Henry Jr., 6
 Reuben, 1, 6
 RICHARDSON
 Lydia, 7
 RUPP
 Dr., 2

-S-
 SHOEMAKER
 Jacob, 7
 Joyce, 7
 SMEDLEY
 Eli, 11
 Elizabeth, 7
 SMITH
 Samuel, 7
 STUBBS
 Joseph, 1, 7
 SUTTON
 Marshall, 15
 SWAYNE
 Caleb, 1

-T-
 TAYLOR
 B. F., 5
 THOMAS
 Joseph, 4
 THOUGH
 Sarah, 1

-W-
 WAY
 William M., 7, 13
 WEAVER
 Anna Mae, 10
 Edith Bradley, 14
 WEBSTER
 Isaac, 1
 John, 1(2), 11

Ruth, 1
WILLIAMS
Isaac, 5
WILSON
David, 1
James, 1
WOOD
Day, 13
Helen, 14
Ida P., 10
James, 10
Norman, 13

Sesqui-Centennial Anniversary

of the establishment of

LITTLE BRITAIN
MONTHLY MEETING

HELD AT

Penn Hill Friends Meeting House

Seventh-day,
8th Month, 28th, AD 1954

Programme

10 A. M.

Presiding Leslie I. Bolton

Piano Prelude Mary A. Hackart

Hymn "Dear Lord and Father of Mankind"
Pianist—Gladys I. Halsey

Devotions..... Edith P. Coates

Greetings Mary A. Gatchell

Exercise..... Children of the First Day Schools,
Eastland and Penn Hill

Greetings Marshall O. Sutton
Executive Secretary, Baltimore Yearly Meeting

Poem—"Old Memories and New Consecrations" by John Russell Hayes
Read by Abbie W. Bradley

Address--"Friends Facing Our Fourth Century"....George A. Walton
Chairman, Friends General Conference

Box Lunch

1:30 P. M.

Instrumental Music.... Junior Members of First Day Schools

Devotions.....Margaret B. Gatchell

History of Little Britain Monthly MeetingHelen Wood Shortlidge

AddressOlcutt Sanders
Director of Information Service of A. F. S. C.

Solo—"Perfect Day"Jean E. Toot

Violin Obligato.....Katherine W. Ambler

Accompanist.....Adaline P. Edwards



